

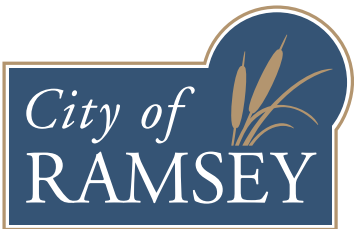
Circle of Ramsey: Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways



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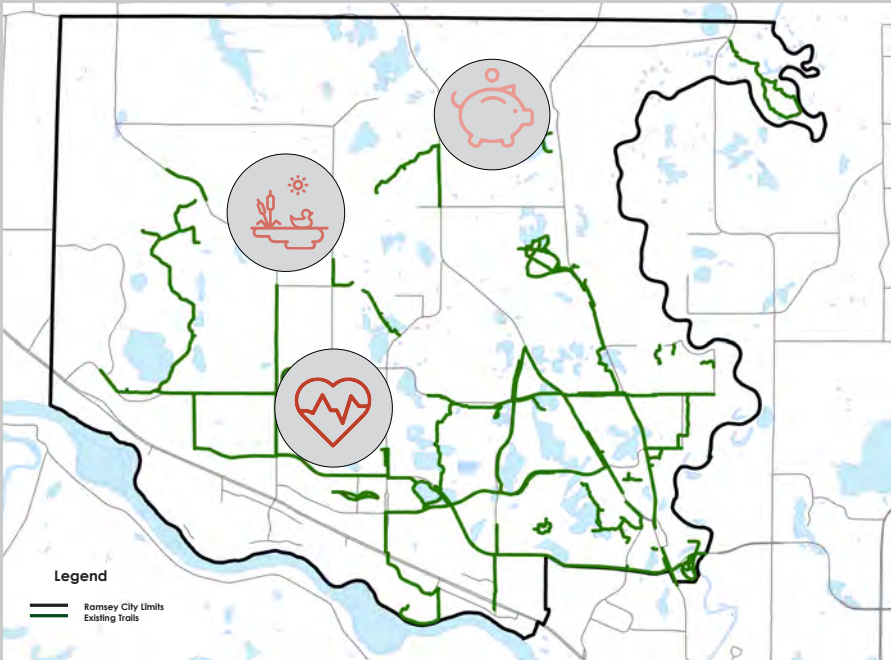
Circle of Ramsey

Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways



Introduction

The Circle of Ramsey is a **proposed greenway trail system** providing the City of Ramsey with health, environmental, and economic **benefits**. Ramsey has built trails throughout the city, but the **Circle of Ramsey is incomplete**. Residents see a **need for conservation** as land develops across the city. Building **green infrastructure**, to make a complete greenway trail system, will **connect** the community and **preserve** vital natural resources. This project identifies **three potential connections** and proposes ideas for what greenway infrastructure could look like in these areas. These three connections will provide trail access to large parts of the community. Eventually, a completed greenway system will give all residents the ability to experience increased health, environmental and economic benefits.



What Are Greenways?

Greenways are privately or publicly owned corridors of protected open space. Some greenways incorporate recreational trails that serve to connect people and places. Other types of greenways are set aside to simply preserve the natural environment. Ramsey's greenway corridors are environmentally sensitive areas, and allow for the protection of water quality and wildlife movement while also connecting people to nature and destinations within the city.



Greenway corridor along the Rum River.

Balancing Growth and Preservation

Currently, Ramsey is experiencing growth and development pressures. It is a crucial time to preserve Ramsey's range of desirable natural features as well as provide for a rapidly growing population. In reaction to resident concern, greenways have been incorporated into Ramsey's comprehensive plan in order to balance development and preservation of land.



Greenway near new development in Ramsey



Health & Wellness

Extension 1

LAKE ITASCA GREENWAY

The Lake Itasca Site is located in the Southwest corner of Ramsey. This extension acts as a connection between mixed-use, industrial and residential development in and around The COR. This connection will create the ability for residents to access downtown while still enjoying the natural amenities Ramsey has to offer.



Environment

Extension 2

SPORTS HAVEN SUBDIVISION

This connection runs through a pristine wetland area in Ramsey. These wetlands are an important natural resource. They provide a habitat for wildlife and act as a buffer for flooding from the single family residential homes that abut its banks. This area adds to the rural character of Ramsey and is a common spot for local fisherman.



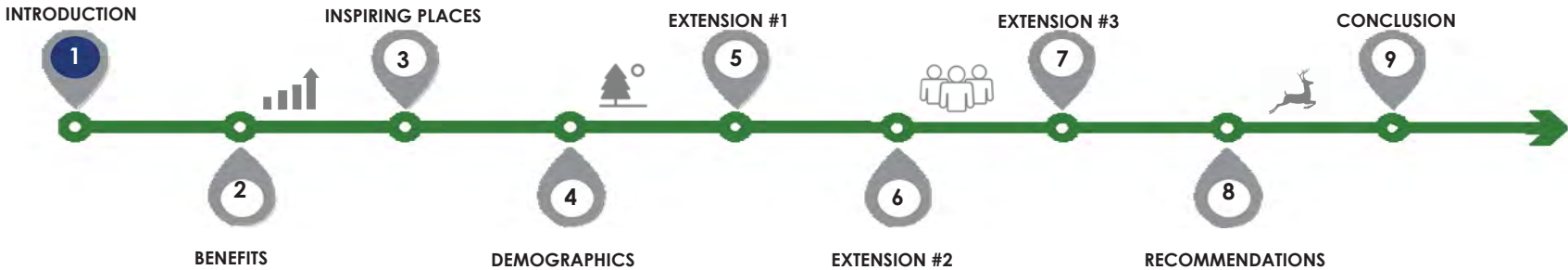
Economy

Extension 3

GREEN VALLEY ROAD

The GVGC is a long-standing Ramsey establishment producing farm/garden products and employing many people. This greenway connection will give commuters the opportunity to use active forms of transportation to get to and from work. This link will also provide access to the greenway system for people located in the northern portion of Ramsey

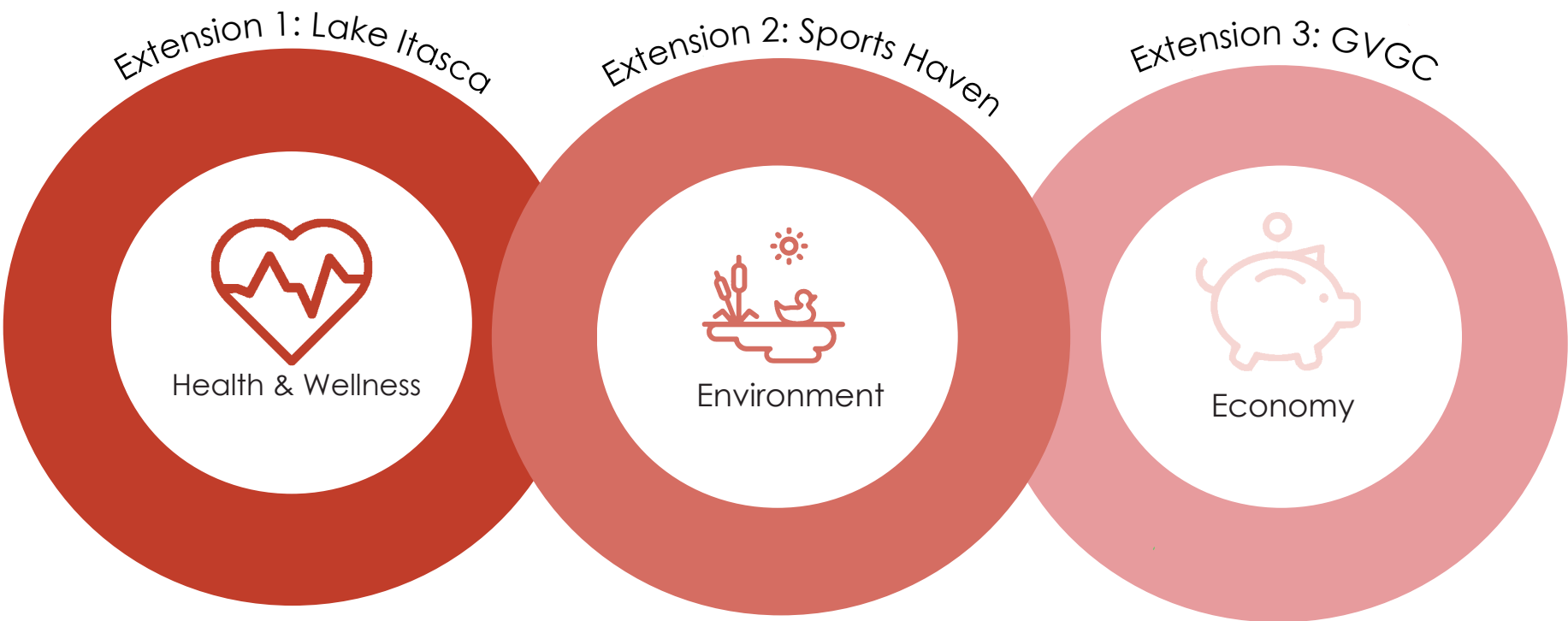
Project Timeline



Three connections to the greenway system: This project identifies **three potential connections** and proposes ideas for what greenway infrastructure could look like in these areas. These three connections will **provide trail access to large parts of the community**. Eventually, the **entire community will be linked** through the greenway trail system and everyone will be able to **reap the benefits that the greenway system provides**.

The Benefits of Greenways

The preservation of **natural ecosystems** and open spaces is often an important component to maintaining a high **quality of life**. Developing greenways is one way we can **preserve Ramsey’s natural features** while also providing opportunities for active and passive recreation, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas and buffers between developed areas. Greenways can serve as **landmarks or distinguishing features** in the local community. It has also been shown that property values increase near natural open spaces, and that **effective planning** for natural resources can benefit all parties. There are many benefits to having greenway systems in a community. The three proposed extensions to the Circle of Ramsey will **provide health and wellness, environmental, and economic benefits** to all users.



Benefits



A community asset: Greenways serve as an **asset** to the community providing opportunities for increased health and wellness, environmental protection and economic **value for all residents**. Moving forward, we will look at three **inspiring cities** around the world that are reaping benefits from greenways. Looking at inspirational cities will help us understand ways to **incorporate greenway infrastructure** into the built environment.

Circle of Ramsey

Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways



Inspiring Greenways

Cities that embrace greenways as an important part of their built environment reap health, environmental and economic benefits. There are many **inspiring greenways** around the world that exist due to **planning and policy decisions** that **support a culture of health and prosperity** in their communities. In this poster, we will explore three **precedents to inform and inspire the design of greenways** in the City of Ramsey. While different in many ways, these three cities display a commitment to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and the benefits they provide their residents.

DAVIS, California



<http://kensbikeski.com/about/kids-gear-trade-in-policy-pg1268.htm>



City Snap Shot

Ready for Recreation: Located just 11 miles west of Sacramento, Davis enjoys a temperate climate and flat topography, making this small town a natural location for active transportation and outdoor recreation.



The City of Davis has a population just over **68,000** and covers a total area of **10.5 sq.mi.** Its population density is **6,888/sq.mi.**



Davis has over **485 acres** of public parks and green-space. **37 parks** and greenbelts are equipped with recreational facilities, including dog parks and community gardens.

Planning & Infrastructure

Davis' **Complete Streets Policy** and **Bike Action Plan** facilitate bicycle infrastructure. Davis has 70 miles of **pathways**, 50 miles of **bike lanes** and 4 miles of **bike boulevards**.



75% of roads in Davis have a **speed limit of 25 mph**, while only **5%** of streets have a speed limit of **35 mph** or greater.



Davis uses **street design techniques**, including separate crossings and bike traffic lights, to keep cyclists safe.



UC Davis campus is equipped with **bike parking** for the 20,000 bikes/day. **54%** of campus trips are made by bike.

www.groundcontrolsystems.com/solutions/campus/

Community Culture



www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/aug/03/davis-california-the-american-city-which-tell-in-love-with-the-bicycle#img-3

Davis' 15-minutes of fame: Photographed by the famous landscape architect Ansel Adams, UC Davis campus was already home to a large number of cyclists by the early 1960s. Today, the streets are still buzzing with a car-free campus and bikes hold 20% of the modal share.

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia



<https://blog.virginia.org/2015/11/bicycle/>



Embracing Preservation: Alexandria is located in northern Virginia, 7 miles south of downtown Washington, D.C., along the banks of the Potomac River. This medium-sized city has embraced the preservation of its natural environment.

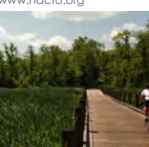


The City of Alexandria has a population of **153,500** and covers an area of **15.5 square miles**. The population density is **10,220/sq.mi.**



Alexandria has more than **900 acres** of parks, conservation easements, and open spaces, including **20 miles** of public trails. The City is a big proponent of urban forestry.

Alexandria's **Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan** makes recommendations for infrastructure improvement including **bicycle turning pockets** and **bridgeways**.



The Mount Vernon Trail stretches **18 miles** along the Potomac River, with **wayfinding signs** along the way.

www.nps.gov/gwmp/planyourvisit/mtnvernontrail.htm



www.greenway.org

Connecting the Coast: Alexandria marks the midpoint on the East Coast Greenway, a **3,000 mile** urban bicycle and walking route. It will connect **15 states** and **450 towns**, from Maine to Florida. With **900 miles** of the trail complete thus far, it will be the longest greenway in America!

COPENHAGEN, Denmark



<http://nordic.businessinsider.com/copenhagen-bicycle-capital-of-the-world-is-bidding-to-host-the-start-of-the-tour-de-france-2016-6/>



An Economic Center: Copenhagen is the capital of Denmark. This large European city values the economic benefits that come with active transportation infrastructure.



The City of Copenhagen has a population of over **600,000** people and covers an area of **33.4 square miles**. The population density is **18,000/sq.mi.**



Copenhagen is known as an environmentally conscious city, due to its commitment to high energy standards, active forms of transportation and sustainable methods of waste and water management.

Copenhagen implements **cycletracks**, which are exclusive bike facilities that combine the user experience of a separated path with the on-street infrastructure of a conventional bike lane.



When it snows, bicycle infrastructure has **plow priority** over auto infrastructure.



Traffic lights in Copenhagen prioritize cyclists over cars.



www.coloribus.com/adsarchive/design/municipality-of-copenhagen-cykelslangen-dissing-wellfing-architecture-9-20478005/

The Famous Cykelslangen: Copenhagen's iconic "Bike Snake" is a two lane bridge that stretches **720 feet** across the harbor.



<http://denmark.dk/en/green-living/bicycle-culture/>

A family affair: Almost half of the population in Copenhagen bikes to school or work, including children.

It is not uncommon to see people hauling their groceries, children or equipment throughout the city on bikes.

Only 1% of people list environmental reasons for why they ride. Most people cycle because it's the easiest way to get around town. The city encourages this by prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian safety in their planning processes.



Inspiration for Ramsey: When cities like Davis, Alexandria and Copenhagen consider greenways a vital component of their urban environment, they provide their residents with **meaningful connection to recreation, environmental preservation and economic prosperity**. As we will see in the next poster, the current state of Ramsey's green infrastructure and community composition present a unique **opportunity for greenway implementation**.

Circle of Ramsey

Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways

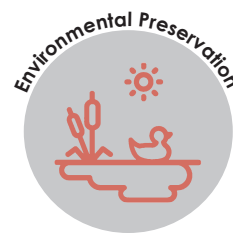
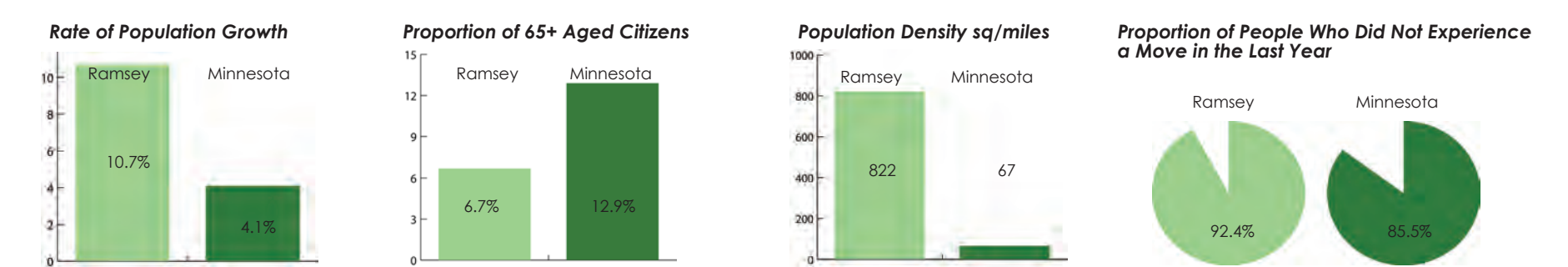


Community Profile

Ramsey is facing a steady **increase in growth** and **development pressures**. Ramsey's existing and proposed **community composition** demonstrates the **need for an expanded greenway trail system**. Greenways are designed to accomodate a **variety of users**, including bicyclists, walkers, hikers, joggers, and those confined to wheelchairs. **Greenways** are an important key to preserving Ramsey, while also accomodating an **increasing population** and existing residents. A look into **Ramsey's existing demographics** can help to predict future trends and **plan for a healthy community**.



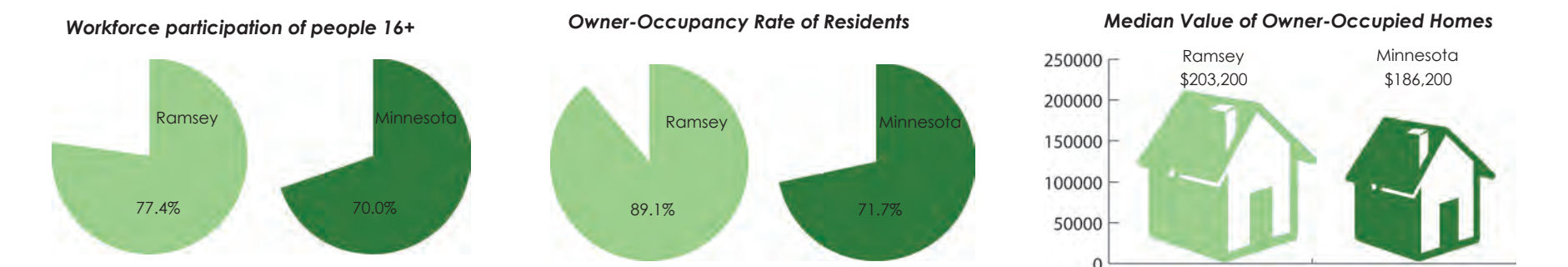
Population trends have suggested that Ramsey will see a large **increase** over the **next 20 years**. Because of the **increase**, the installation and maintenance of **recreational amenities** will be important to sustain a **healthy community**. The **predicted influx** of people will bring in a **younger population** who typically seek out **diverse housing** types. Ramsey's population density will have a big **impact on open space** within the city. Tracking the **changes in demographic data** will be crucial for **planning a community** where all residents have the ability to **increase their health and wellness**.



Currently, **8%** of land in Ramsey is dedicated to **public open space**. The City recognizes the pressure that **growth** will place on **natural resources** and is moving to proactively **develop plans** that will **balance growth** and **resource protection**. Citizens of Ramsey have supported these **preservation plans** because they prioritize **public space** and the **rural character** of their community. Equipping Ramsey with **greenway infrastructure** creates the potential to **reduce air pollution** by encouraging alternative modes of **transportation**, allowing passive **recreational use** without the disturbance of protected areas, and **preserving culturally** and **historically valuable areas**.



Ramsey has a **high owner-occupancy** rate with **home equity** being an important form of **wealth for its residents**. Ramsey's high **workforce population** necessitates commuting alternatives. **Greenways** provide **alternative forms of transportation** as well as increase **property values** and spur **new development**. **Greenways** can also act as a buffer between **homes** and **natural environments** which can keep Ramsey residents' **home values** high. **Greenways** also have the ability to create **direct revenue** for a community through **eco-tourism** or **recreational businesses**.



All demographic data from 2010 United States Census and 2016 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates



Benefits for all residents: Current and future residents can **benefit** from a **complete greenway trail system**. There are three connections in Ramsey that are seen as a **priority to connect** residents to **destinations around the city**. First we will **envision a route** from the **Center of Ramsey** to **Lake Itasca**. This connection will provide **recreational activities** and act as a **linkage** between **single-family homes** and **the downtown**.

Circle of Ramsey

Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways

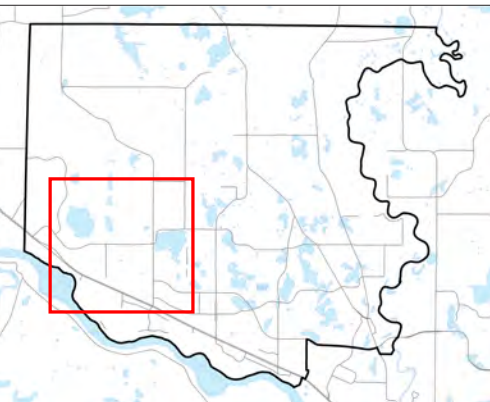


Extension 1: Lake Itasca Greenway

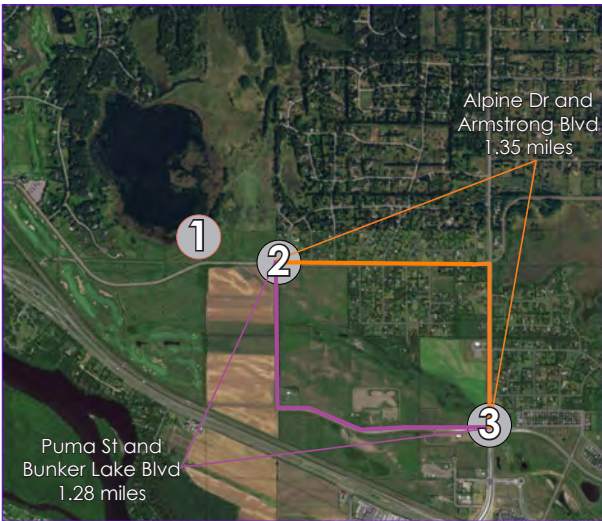


Lake Itasca is the largest lake in the city of Ramsey and a valued natural **recreational amenity**. The **current route** from Lake Itasca to the **Center of Ramsey (COR)** includes bike paths alongside **busy roads** with high traffic speeds. Extension 1 is a proposed greenway **trail connection** through undeveloped land from **the Center of Ramsey to Lake Itasca**. While the existing trail is functional, this **extension would increase safety, aesthetics, and provide an access point for future residents in this area**. The **future land uses** in this area include residential and industrial uses. The creation of this extension would preserve the area by implementing **green infrastructure prior to development**. By doing so, **future populations** will be able to access the **greenway system**.

Existing: On-Road Path



This is a photo of the **existing bike trail** on the south shores of Lake Itasca. This extension would connect back up to the scenic trail that follows the Lake Itasca shoreline.



This is the intersection of **Alpine Dr. and Puma St.**, which is the proposed entry point to an off-road greenway improvement. The existing route parallels Puma St. and turns onto Alpine Dr. The proposed extension would cut through the properties in between Alpine and Puma.



This is the intersection of **Armstrong and Bunker Lake Blvs.**, looking NW to Lake Itasca. This would be an entry point for the proposed extension route. Currently, the route parallels Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Proposed: Off-Road Greenway Connector

Through this **extension**, we can create **a route** that would follow the **natural landscape** of the wetland, while also providing users with a **safe** and **scenic route**. This wetland area is incompatible with **built infrastructure**; therefore, its best use is **green infrastructure**. While **development builds** around the wetland, the trail will already be in place, guaranteeing residents access to the **trail system**.



Proposed Route: In the image above, we see a proposed route for a safer, shorter, and more aesthetically pleasing recreational trail from the Center of Ramsey to Lake Itasca.

Future Greenway: The image to the right is a rendering of what a future greenway could look like. It would serve a variety of residents and visitors with a straight route under a mile.



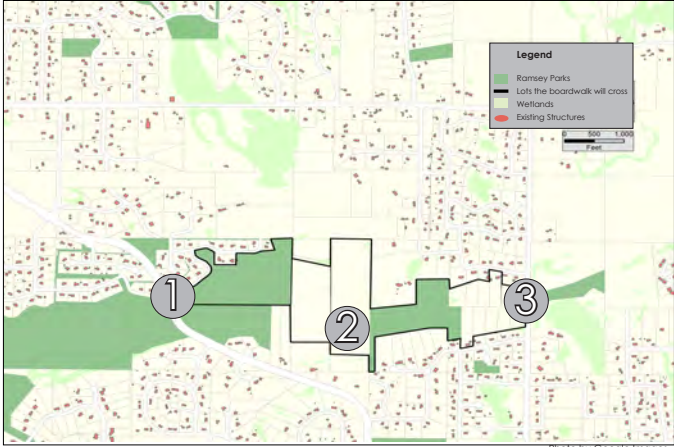
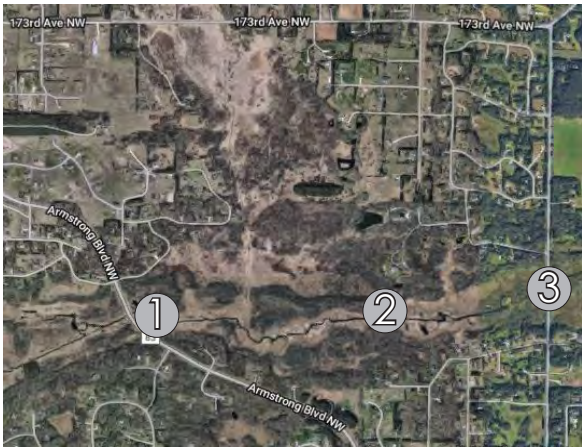
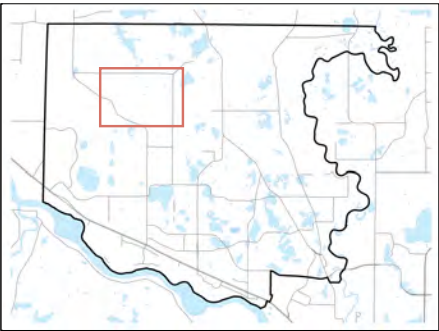
Greenway infrastructure: As **development occurs** in this southeast region of Ramsey, the **implementation of green infrastructure** will be necessary to **provide** current and future residents with **access to these trails**. This **wetland area** is not buildable land which means the only **compatible land use** is **greenway infrastructure**. These greenway links are valuable **recreational resources** and help preserve the **natural environment**.

Extension 2: Sports Haven Subdivision



This site extension is located along the Trott Brook River and the proposed route is through the Sports Haven Subdivision outlots. Since this area is designated as a **wetland area**, it is not suited for development. Homeowners whose lots abut Trott Brook would benefit from this extension because it would provide them **access to the greenway trail system** and connection to **destinations throughout Ramsey**.

Existing: No Access to Trott Brook



Currently, there is no existing bike trail that connects Armstrong Blvd to Variolite Street. Residents that live in the subdivision that borders the Trott Brook do not have access to the scenic creek.



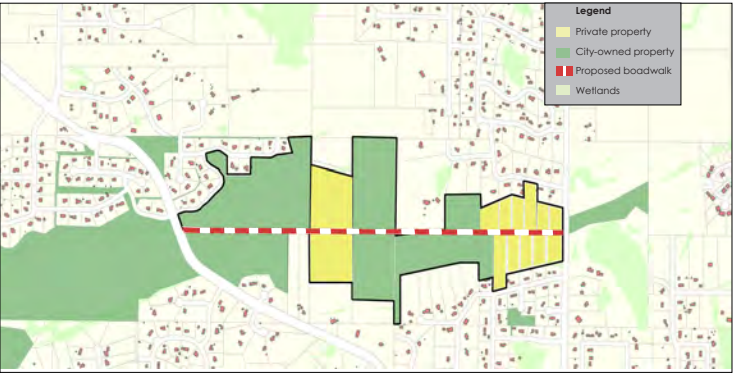
The Trott Brook is home to many wild animals. The implementation of green infrastructure would allow animals to continue to move while allowing people to travel from Armstrong Blvd to Variolite St.



Lots in the Trott Brook Subdivision (outlined above) will have to approve this extension since it will cross into their property. However, there are no existing structures in the proposed path. Since this area is wetland, the only appropriate infrastructure would be green infrastructure. This connection would allow residents from this subdivision and neighboring residents access to the rest of the greenway system.

Proposed: Greenway Boardwalk

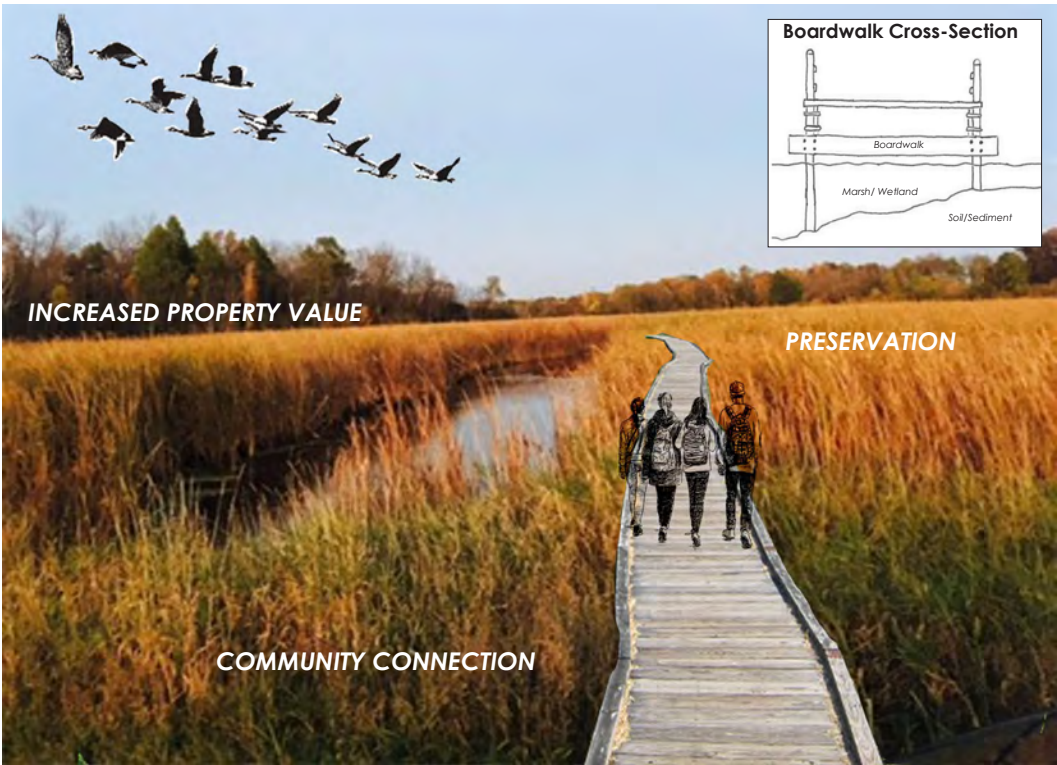
This extension has the ability to increase property values within the Sports Haven Subdivision and provide those residents with the ability to access the greenway system. The boardwalk would allow for the preservation of the wetland area while simultaneously providing access to natural areas.



Steps to Implementation

- Step 1:** The twelve property owners (see above map) will have to agree to the proposed boardwalk plan.
- Step 2:** Property owners would have to approve an easement or dedicate a portion of their property to the City for the boardwalk.
- Step 3:** The construction of the boardwalk will be an expensive project but the benefits will be seen immediately after installation and for years to come.

These landowners will benefit greatly from this installation in the form of **increased property value**, **access to the greenway trail for recreation**, and the ability to have a close **connection to the wildlife in their backyard** as well as access to the rest of the community.



Boardwalk benefits: The installation of a boardwalk across Trott Brook would lead to community **connectivity**, landscape **preservation**, and **increased property values** near the boardwalk. In addition, a boardwalk would bring Ramsey residents **closer** to nature. In the next poster, we will explore **added benefits** that a separated bike lane provides the Ramsey community.

Circle of Ramsey

Linking People and Landscape Through Greenways

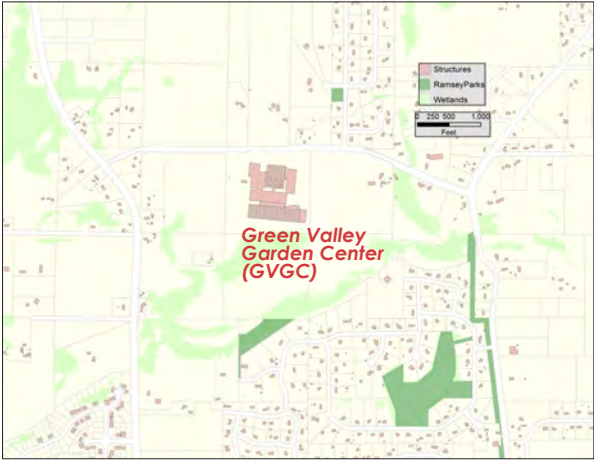
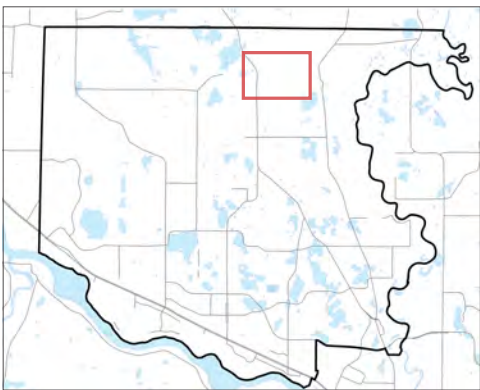


Extension 3: Green Valley Road

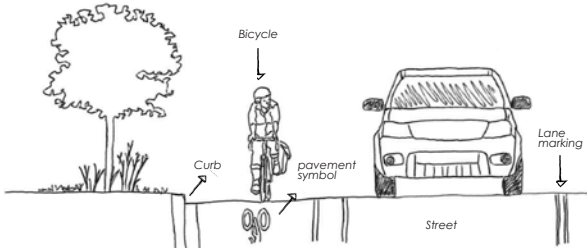


The Green Valley Garden Center (GVGC) provides a wealth of gardening products and services for Ramsey and the Twin Cities metro area. With almost 25 acres of indoor and outdoor growing space, **GVGC continues to grow along with demand.** As a **prominent stakeholder in Ramsey's business community**, GVGC employs many Ramsey residents. Connecting the GVGC to the Circle of Ramsey would provide GVGC employees, as well as neighboring residents, increased **opportunity to partake in active forms of commuting.** A one-mile greenway extension between Nowthen and St. Francis Blvds on Green Valley Rd. could take the form of a **bike lane**, a **separated lane** or a **shared-use path**.

Existing: Commute by Vehicle

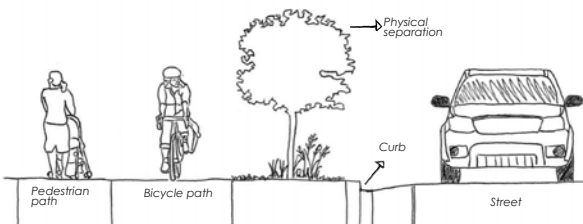


Option 1: Bike Lane



A traditional bike lane establishes an area for exclusive bicycle use. Bike lanes include **visual cues** like lane markings, **pavement symbols** and **signs** to make drivers aware of cyclists on the roadway.

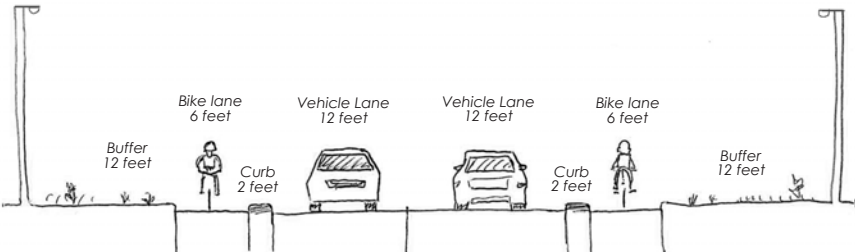
Option 2: Shared-Use Path



Shared-use paths provide a **separate travel space** for cyclists and pedestrians away from motor vehicle travel. These paths create a **low-stress environment** that is beneficial for both recreation and transportation.

Proposed: (Option 3) A Separated Bike Lane

Beyond providing Green Valley Garden Center employees with a safer and more comfortable bicycle commute to work, this greenway extension serves as a connection for the surrounding area. This connection includes a separated bike lane. This bike lane would be used exclusively by bicyclists and would be located directly adjacent to Green Valley Road. Most importantly, it is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by a vertical element like a post, bollard, raised median or planter. Separated bike lanes are suitable for cyclists traveling on high-speed and high-volume roadways.



Separated bike lanes are made up of:

1. The bike lane (ideally 7 ft wide, to allow for side-by-side riding and passing)
2. The roadway separation (ideally a 1-3 ft wide vertical element that is highly visible to motorists)

In some cases, it may be suitable to add a pedestrian sidewalk adjacent to the separated bike lane. In addition to bike lane symbol markings on pavement, bike lane signs bring about more awareness of cyclists on roadways.



Photos of Green Valley Garden Center by Steve Scheider



Many people live within 5 miles of the GVGC. This greenway extension is a prime opportunity for recreation and exercise for these residents.



Just 2.5 miles from the GVGC is the Rum River Regional Park. A local destination for canoeing, hiking, fishing and more.



Located just 1.5 miles from GVGC, Fox Park offers more green space for residents to congregate, recreate and exercise.



Planning for greenway extensions: Equipping the Lake Itasca, Sports Haven Outlot Parcels and Green Valley Road sites with greenway infrastructure will **facilitate a connected Circle of Ramsey**. Now that we have seen three greenway extension examples, we can dive deeper into additional **planning and infrastructure recommendations** that will further support an integrated Circle of Ramsey.

Circle of Ramsey

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Recommendations

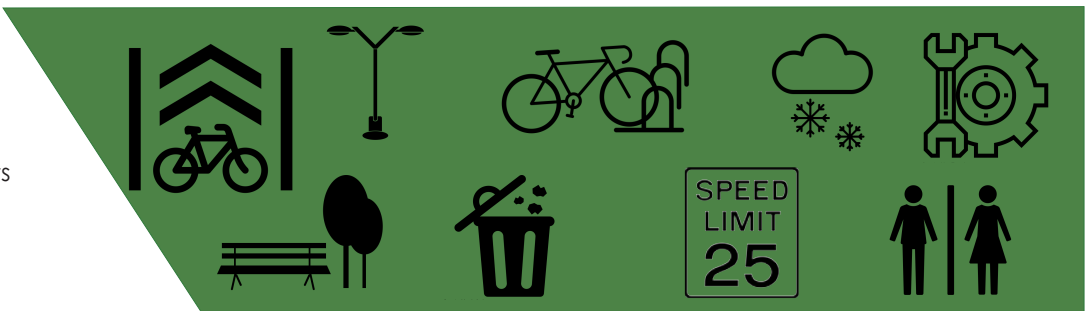
Each of the three proposed extension sites serve as an important opportunity to connect The Circle of Ramsey. The development of **infrastructure, a culture of health, and policy** will reflect the **Ciy of Ramsey's commitment to a connected greenway trail system**. The rendering below depicts the implementation of some of our recommendations for The Draw in Ramsey.



Infrastructure

There are several infrastructure developments that Ramsey can implement to promote greenway use:

- A **bicycle repair station** near to The COR
- Path **lighting** along frequently traveled routes
- **Pavement marking** and **signage**, bringing awareness to cyclists
- **Benches** and **garbage cans** in recreational areas
- Reduced **speed limits**, where bike lanes are present
- **Plow priority** for paths during snowy times
- **Bike racks** and **public restrooms** at parks, trail heads, etc.



These developments will make Ramsey more **accessible, enjoyable** and **safe** for cyclists and pedestrians.

A Culture of Health and Policymaking

We recommend Ramsey consider bicycle- and pedestrian-inclusive policies and cultural incentives to promote active greenways:

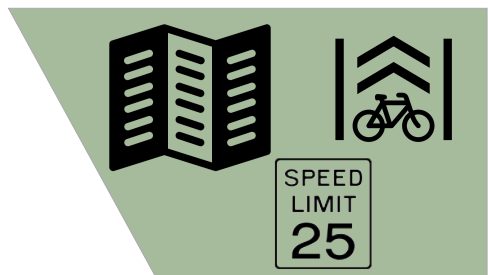
- **Placemaking**, a design approach that focuses on a local community's unique composition to create quality public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, and well being
- **Wayfinding** signs throughout the Circle of Ramsey, to help people orient themselves to their destinations
- **Community rides** offer residents opportunities for group socialization and exercise, as well as encourage visits to local businesses
- **Bike-to-work-week** encourages healthy competition among places of employment
- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)** is a national organization, coordinated locally by MN Dept. of Transportation. In conjunction with schools, families, public health professionals, planners, community groups, and law enforcement officers, SRTS aims to make it safer for students to walk and bike to school using education, encouragement, engineering and enforcement to meet a local community's needs.
- **Shower facilities** at places of work



Ramsey should adopt a **Complete Streets Policy** that sets a standard for the design and operation of streets for all users.

Minimum Standards for County Roads

Should Ramsey decide to embrace alternative forms of transportation, there are minimum standards to be implemented on county roads. Beyond **pavement markings, signage** and **reduced speed limits**, Ramsey should consider **educational outreach** to instruct drivers, cyclists and pedestrians about shared road space and traffic law. Ramsey may consider using television and radio **public service announcements, educational videos, traffic safety guides** in the form of brochures, and the **integration of traffic safety into school and driver training curricula**.



Recommendations for a vibrant tomorrow: There are several infrastructure, policy and cultural changes that Ramsey can make that will help to promote a safe, fun, and functional greenway network for all residents. As we will see in the following poster, Ramsey's decision to implement bicycle and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and policy today promotes a greener, healthier and economically vibrant Circle of Ramsey tomorrow!



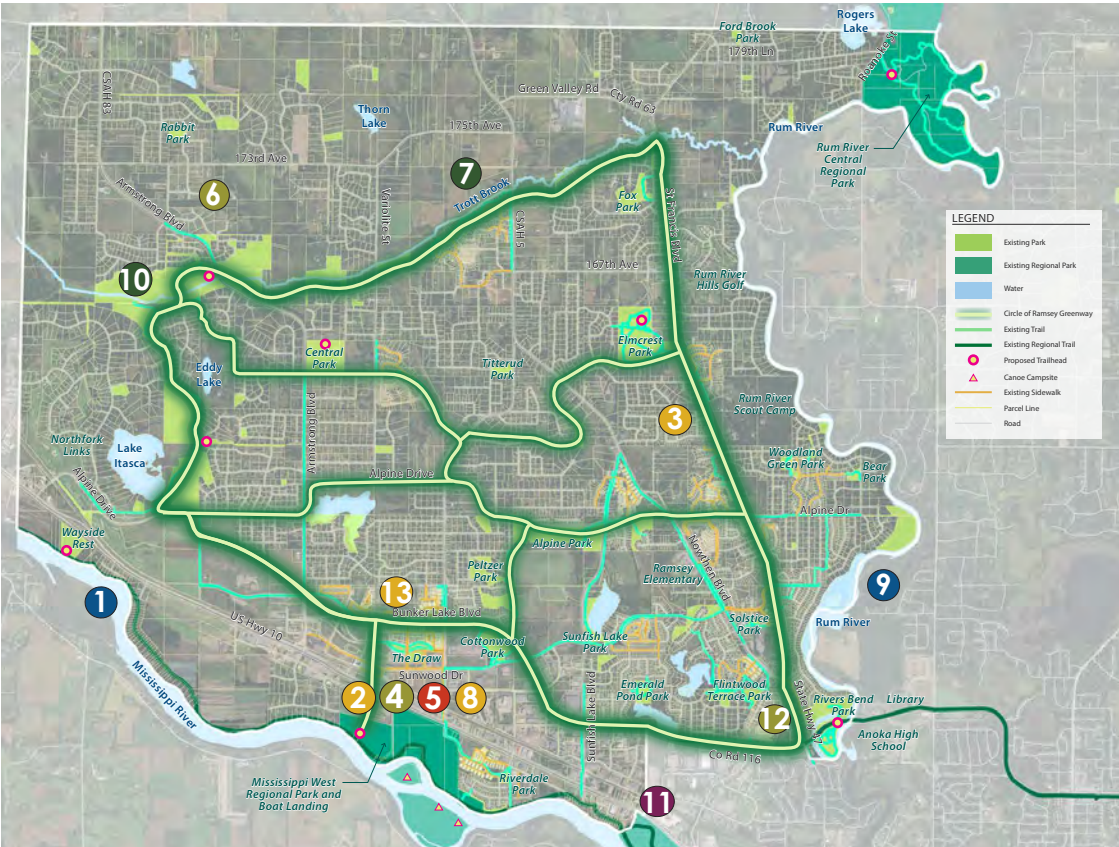
Circle of Ramsey

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Conclusion

The **Circle of Ramsey** provides residents meaningful opportunities for recreation, nature preservation and active transportation. Beyond the benefits explored in our extension sites, residents will be connected to many **destinations throughout the city**, including the community connections explored in the thirteen following projects.



Community Connections in the Circle of Ramsey



7. Vibrant Streets
Street trees will ensure that future generations of Ramsey residents will share in the benefits of more engaging public spaces, a thriving natural environment and a connected community.



8. Housing Opportunity
While Ramsey offers many types of housing, The COR is home to a rare housing type: multifamily rental units that are accessible to people at all life stages and income levels.



9. Water Resources
Ramsey is rich in water resources like wetlands, lakes, and the Rum and Mississippi Rivers, assets that need support and protection to sustain their value to the community.



10. Pollinator Habitats
Pollinator friendly habitats are critical in preserving Ramsey's natural environment.



1. Mississippi Shoreline
The Mississippi River provides residents recreational opportunities and a scenic landscape along both private property and public land.



4. The COR
The COR acts as a central gathering place in Ramsey, using placemaking as a tool to serve residents and visitors alike.



11. Highway 10 Corridor
As the Gateway to Greater Minnesota, Highway 10 is both an entrance for and a showcase of Ramsey, with dozens of businesses that support outdoor recreation.



2. Business Incubator
A co-working space in City Hall will attract local and aspiring entrepreneurs and provide them with a central location for innovation and collaboration.



5. Community Center
The COR is a potential location for a centralized community center or hub for satellite centers, offering multiple services and amenities to all residents.



12. Old Town Hall
The Old Town Hall creates a sense of place and acts as a connection to Ramsey's rural roots.



3. Development Fees
Development fees support the construction of parks and trails, like the trail along St. Francis Blvd.



6. Infrastructure Inventory
When Ramsey uses software to manage their infrastructure, they are better able to care for assets such as fire hydrants and streetlights.



13. Retail Market
The potential for a thriving retail environment in Ramsey is bolstered by greenway connections, an abundance of green space, and an array of outdoor and recreational assets.



Through the **Resilient Communities Project**, Urban and Regional Planning students have had the opportunity to propose land-use innovations, planning solutions and development strategies, seen in the thirteen projects above, in order to **inform policy** that **promotes resilience** for generations to come. **The Circle of Ramsey**, including the Lake Itasca, Sports Haven and Green Valley Road extension sites explored in this project, facilitates community connection to destinations and assets throughout the city.



The Draw Amphitheater is a special destination in Ramsey, MN, providing natural beauty for COR residents and visitors alike. This multi-use public space can be used for weddings, performances or simple picnics and is a priority connection in The Circle of Ramsey.



The Northstar Commuter Rail Station: Located next to City Hall in The COR, Ramsey's Northstar Station and surrounding area is an example of transit-oriented development (TOD), connecting residents to destinations in the greater Twin Cities metropolitan region.



Scenic Rivers: Both the Rum and Mississippi Rivers pass through Ramsey, offering residents and visitors access to outdoor recreation opportunities like fishing and boating, as well as biking, jogging and hiking along adjacent trails.